



LAHTI M40 PISTOL

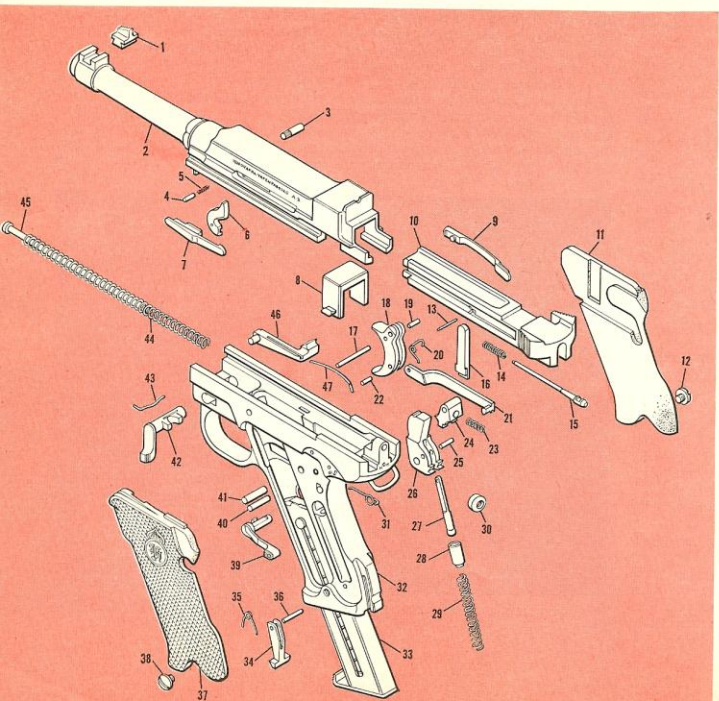
By E. J. Hoffschmidt

GUN designer Aimo Johannes Lahti of Finland developed a wide range of firearms for his native land—from automatic pistols to aircraft cannons. Today he is best known for an automatic pistol adopted as the L35 by Finland and, in slightly modified form, as the M40 by Sweden.

While the Finnish L35 Lahti is virtually unknown here, the Swedish M40 version is far more common. A number of these guns, marked Husqvarna Vapenfabriks A. B., were imported and sold in the U. S. around 1949 and 1950.

The Lahti is a heavy, rugged gun and mirrors the conditions it was de-

signed for. The operating parts are strong and well designed for the extreme cold encountered along the Finnish and Swedish frontiers. The serrations on the slide are deep and tapered so that the slide can be retracted easily with a heavily gloved hand. The large trigger guard and protruding safety



Parts Legend

1. Front sight
2. Barrel and barrel extension
3. Accelerator stop pin
4. Accelerator retainer
5. Accelerator retainer spring
6. Accelerator
7. Ejector
8. Locking block
9. Extractor
10. Slide
11. Right grip
12. Grip screw
13. Firing pin retainer pin
14. Firing pin spring
15. Firing pin
16. Disconnecter
17. Trigger pin
18. Trigger
19. Trigger spring pin
20. Trigger spring
21. Trigger bar
22. Trigger bar pin
23. Sear spring
24. Sear
25. Hammer strut pin
26. Hammer
27. Hammer strut
28. Hammer spring plunger
29. Hammer spring
30. Spring guide nut
31. Trigger bar spring
32. Frame
33. Magazine
34. Magazine catch
35. Magazine catch spring
36. Magazine catch pin
37. Left grip
38. Grip screw
39. Safety catch
40. Sear pin
41. Hammer pin
42. Takedown catch
43. Takedown catch spring
44. Recoil spring
45. Recoil spring guide
46. Hold-open catch
47. Hold-open catch spring

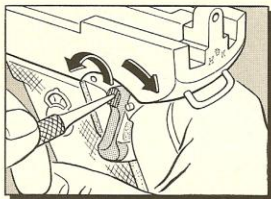
catch were also designed for gloved-hand operation. The cold weather also influenced mechanism design.

Even though the gun shoots the powerful 9 mm. Luger cartridge, Lahti added an accelerator to aid the operating mechanism. The accelerator in L35 and M40 pistols is a lever pivoted to the barrel extension. As the barrel, barrel extension, and slide recoil to the rear, the locking block is cammed free of the slide. At this instant the lower portion of the accelerator strikes the receiver wall and this blow is transmitted to the unlocked slide, throwing it back with great force. When the slide counter-recoils, it pushes the accelerator back into place.

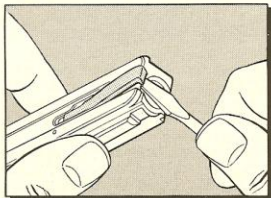
An excellent grip and a long, fixed sighting radius make the gun a fine shooter. When equipped with its Luger-type shoulder stock, it becomes a formidable carbine.

An unfavorable feature of this pistol is that it will fire with its locking block removed. A check should therefore be made before firing to make sure locking block is present.

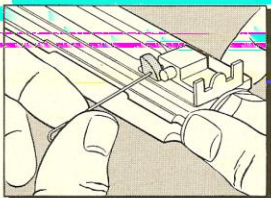
Under an excellent blue job, the Swedish-made Lahti shows a great deal of rough machining and hand finishing. Fortunately this does not detract from the reliability and accuracy of the gun, since critical operating parts and bore are well finished.



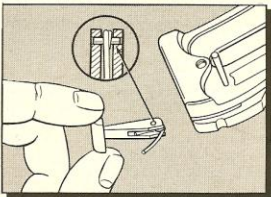
3 Safety catch (39) must be removed before attempting removal of left grip. Insert a thin punch into hole in serrated portion of safety. Pry it back slightly, enough to swing it over stop pin in frame. Rotate it to horizontal position and pull it out



4 Extractor (9) is long and flexible. It is removed by inserting a small screwdriver under lip to push it free of locking hole in slide (10), then prying it out of its seat



5 The accelerator (6) is designed for easy removal. Simply rotate accelerator until small hole in its side lines up with spring-loaded retainer pin (4). Push a thin piece of wire or paper clip through hole to depress spring. Lift out accelerator

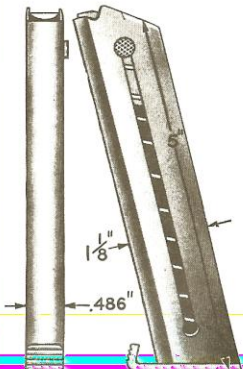


6 Some Lahti parts are difficult to reassemble without the aid of short lease pins. To replace magazine catch (34) and spring (35), use a short pin to hold them together until in position. Incoming magazine pin will drive short pin out other side and spring will remain in its place

Lahti Model 40



PISTOL MAGAZINES



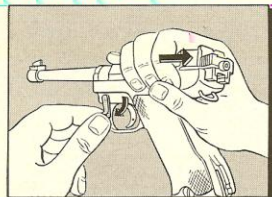
A few years ago a number of 9 mm. Lahti pistols were imported into America from Sweden. The Swedish gun is a slight modification of the original Finnish design. As handguns go, it is big and bulky but the grip is excellent. It is a locked breech recoil-operated design that will handle any of the various loadings of the 9 mm. Luger cartridge. In spite of the fact that Sweden was not a combatant in World War II, the guns usually show signs of hasty machining with numerous tool marks evident on Swedish Lahtis. The Finnish gun and Swedish copy are so similar that magazines are interchangeable.



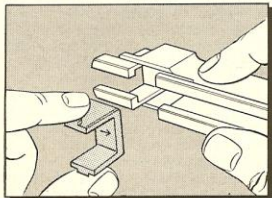
Lahti magazines can usually be recognized by the rugged cast aluminum follower and Luger-type magazine button. The magazines are large, strong, and generally well made.



The floorplate is probably the best point of recognition. It is made from a flat steel stamping and affords an excellent grip when removing the magazine from the gun.—E. J. HOFFSCHMIDT



1 The Lahti takedown is simple. First remove magazine and clear chamber. Hold barrel extension (2) back as shown, or push the muzzle against a hard surface; at same time rotate takedown catch (42). Barrel assembly is now slid forward off receiver



2 After barrel and barrel extension are free of receiver, push locking block (8) up and withdraw slide (10). When replacing locking block, be sure arrow on underside of block is facing forward toward barrel